CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 7 SEPTEMBER 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN ADDRESSED TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF HIS STATEMENT MADE ON PARAGRAPH 29 OF THE REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT ON THE ISSUE OF A FISSILE MATERIALS CONVENTION

I have the honour to forward herewith the text of a statement I delivered at the 692nd plenary meeting on 7 September 1994, concerning the text of paragraph 29 of the Report of the Conference on Disarmament to the General Assembly.

I should be grateful if the statement could be circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed): Ahmad Kamal
Ambassador and Permanent Representative

GE.94-64285 (E)

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR AHMAD KAMAL ON THE TEXT OF PARAGRAPH 29 OF THE REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT ON THE ISSUE OF A FISSILE MATERIALS CONVENTION

1. My delegation was happy to hear the report of the Special Coordinator, Ambassador Gerald Shannon, and welcomes the agreement on the text of paragraph 29 on the subject of a future Fissile Materials Convention which has been incorporated in the report of the Conference on Disarmament.

2. As we all know, the Special Coordinator's consultations have been prolonged and difficult. This was essentially because there was, and there continues to be, a wide divergence of views among the members of the Conference on Disarmament on the scope of the proposed Fissile Materials Convention.

3. This disagreement emerged after it became clear to many that the word "production" used in the General Assembly resolution 48/75 of 16 December 1993, was going to be restrictively interpreted to imply "future" production only, thus excluding past production and stockpiles altogether. This effort at deliberately excluding past production or stockpiles from the purview of a Convention on Fissile Materials does not make logical sense, even less so in the light of recent incidents and developments, and is, therefore, not acceptable to many delegations. It would be a perpetuation or legitimization of the asymmetry which exists globally and regionally, and would put the whole concept of nuclear disarmament into serious doubt.

4. My delegation has also taken note of Ambassador Shannon's suggestion that the mandate proposed by him earlier was without prejudice to a discussion on the stockpiles issue in the Ad Hoc Committee. If this proposal was made in all earnestness and with the approval of those who oppose discussion of the stockpiles issue, then my delegation fails to understand why an explicit reference could not be made in the mandate. We all know that it is the mandate from which the scope is derived, which in turn guides the debate in the Committee. We would not be justified in believing that without any reference to stockpiles in the mandate, the Treaty will address this important issue.

5. The recent plutonium smuggling incidents, which may only be a precursor to what could happen, vindicates our view that the stockpiles issue needs urgent attention. It is a clear hint that the most immediate danger today comes from the existing stocks and has to be addressed urgently.

6. A Fissile Materials Convention will have to be negotiated on a basis of non-discriminatory approach and a comprehensive scope if it is to meet the security interests of concerned States and the aspirations of the international community. We have all agreed, in principle, that an Ad Hoc Committee should be established as soon as a mandate is agreed. We have no doubt that the Special Coordinator will continue his efforts to propose a mandate which incorporates these unexceptionable objectives.